

Communicating with those beyond the veil and healing one's ancestral wounds is what this Spiritwalker was destined to do. Coming from a long lineage of healers, Mariella struggles with living in two worlds, exploring her abilities to help others, while battling forces that don't want to see her succeed.


SPIRITWALKER: The Beginning

By Laura Silvana Aversano

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THE BEGINNING

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Second Edition

FEAR



It is nearly past sunset as Mariella sits in the silence of her living room. Her body trembles with fear, her mind races with escalating thoughts of impending doom, her hands clenching the elegant wooden Buddha statue given to her so long ago. Visions pass through her eyes of a parallel reality. She observes her shallow breaths as she cowers toward the golden-hued carpet, her hands in a prayerful state as she drops the Buddha statue and begins to pray.

“Hail Mary, full of grace, the Lord is with thee.” She repeats this phrase until it echoes throughout the room. That cold, still feeling that both entrances and encumbers Mariella when the spirits take over her world is unrelenting.

Those who have crossed from this world into the next, whether they belong to the human, animal, or plant kingdom, whether they are fairies, divas, angels, demons, those who have died recently, or those who have died long ago, they all clamor for her attention. They have since she was a child—a gift and a curse passed down through her family.

Not only do they vie to speak to her and through her, they long to be near her to communicate and help those who are still living. They come to protect her tenfold, and many times they come to do her harm. Many spirits who live in the light take joy in Mariella’s presence and because of that many who live in the darkness try to prevent her from doing the work she was born to do.

As she sits on the floor still enveloped in the Hail Mary, she is reminded of her gifts and burden. Her body writhes with pain as she

focuses not only in this world but also in the other and asks for a vision to clarify what is befalling her.

The chill in the air becomes stifling, the lights flicker, and Mariella's vision blurs as she waits for an apparition or a voice. She hears the empty footsteps in the air around her, the stalking energy becomes apparent, and the death-like breath from the spirit world begins to break through the ethers.

Just a few minutes feels like hours.

Unbeknownst to her, she begins to tremble more. She grasps her ears as the screeches from the outer worlds enter her world, screeches unheard by most humans. They writhe enough to frighten even the most ignorant of souls, and the gentlest of animals. Her diaphragm tightens as she gasps for air. She loses control of her thoughts, the terror taking hold as she realizes she is about to be attacked by a demon.

She has encountered thousands of them throughout her lifetime. In varying forms and intensities, they come when Mariella assumes she is always protected. Some are so strong their powers reach far into this world, once causing a traumatic car accident that almost took her life some years ago, and many times wreaking havoc in her relationships. They had caused mysterious illnesses that doctors could never find the origins of, and in some cases, the cures. The screeches grow louder as these voices begin to swirl through her mind.

She recalls the lineage of psychic powers that has passed from great-grandmother down. She pictures their instructions on protection when a demon of this nature draws near. She wants to know why she is being attacked but asking the demon will only strengthen it. Instead she waits, letting the attack work through her. The visions come and go as she monitors her breath and works effortlessly to breathe a little more deeply.

The demon doesn't have a name. Its scathing darkness is germinating into a form large enough to hinder her from seeing the very room she is stuck in. The veil between the worlds is so transparent that her living room no longer looks the same. It appears ice cold, and Mariella's extremities mirror that coldness down to her bones. At this point the

demon is so close Mariella loses sight of which world she is in. Is she still protected?

The demon enters her mind. She shudders, trying to understand why he is there because any move she makes or precalculates is already known by her enemy.

She recognizes him, the same one she had fought a thousand times over. She is surprised that those who protect her have allowed him to threaten her again.

What is the reason? Has Mariella broken any of the spiritual cardinal rules? Did she cross any boundaries in the spirit world she wasn't supposed to? She doesn't care about the answer. She just wants the tormenting to stop.

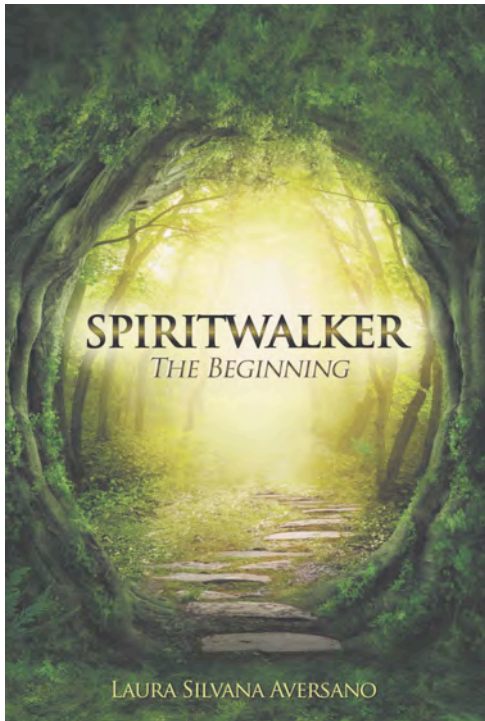
The demon meanders through her mind's eye, the stench of his invisible form permeating Mariella's home. The rage of this demon is unstoppable. She continues praying, all the while hearing the voices cursing her. She knows she is getting stronger.

This demon's fury is incomparable to anything she can recall. His previous forms in this lifetime and in others were not as vile. His insidious snarls threaten to destroy any hope of salvation. She waits for this to end as it has so many times before. His form changes before her eyes, his breath caressing her neck. He wants to devour her.

The screeches begin to dissipate, then a silence, a deadening silence. Slowly but surely her heartbeat slows down. Her breath lightens. The abhorrent stench slowly begins to transform to the scent of roses. She lets out a deep sigh and raises her head gently to see angels, fairies, and the good spirits as a shield. These spirits are very familiar to her. The demonic form is gone; the voices leave her head, and she once again feels safe.

The angels are slight in form and color, the animal spirits embracing, the fairies effervescent, and some of Mariella's guides from Native Americans to indigenous healers and shamans of the world's cultures are abound. Whenever she is attacked like this, many come, and they always will. Glancing around her living room, she recognizes that she is unscathed.

She only has one thought about the demon, that it returned with a vengeance to take away the good she had created in her life. If she can figure out a way to rise above its nature, the curse will be broken.



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